



EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission

No.: 44-91

Effective Date:

2/13/92

TITLE: PERSONNEL HAIR SAFETY AND GROOMING STANDARDS

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Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission Regulation on:

PERSONNEL HAIR SAFETY AND GROOMING STANDARDS

Issued by: Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission

Regulation No. 44-91

Authority: Code Section 21-4B(e)

Supersedes: No. FR 11-86

Council Review: Method (2) under Code Section 2A-15

Register Vol. 8, No. 10

Effective Date: February 13, 1992

- SUMMARY:** These grooming standards update standards promulgated in 1986 and are intended to promote personnel safety regarding the proper fit and use of firefighting headgear and breathing apparatus, and to enhance the professional image of uniformed members of the fire and rescue service.
- DATE:** Montgomery County Register Comment: October 31, 1991
 Dept. of Fire and Rescue Services Comment: October 31, 1991
 Montgomery County Fire Board Review: October 31, 1991
 Fire and Rescue Corporations Comment: October 31, 1991
- ADDRESS:** All comments pertaining to the proposed regulation must be sent to George Giebel, Chairman, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission, 12th Floor, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD 20850.
- STAFF:** For further information, you may contact Beth Murphy, Administrative Specialist, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission, on 217-2461.
- BACKGROUND:** Federal safety regulations require that fire and rescue service personnel conform to a hair grooming standard that ensures proper fit of firefighting headgear and respiratory protection equipment. The proposed regulation establishes a grooming standard that is intended to ensure the personal safety and enhance the professional appearance of all fire and rescue personnel.



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Sec. 1. Purpose. To provide a standard for hair length and style to ensure the safety and enhance the professional appearance of all on-duty fire and rescue service personnel.

Sec. 2. Applicability. This regulation applies to all on-duty fire, rescue, and emergency medical service personnel who are authorized to respond to emergency incidents in Montgomery County.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

- (a) **Bulk.** Distance that the mass of hair extends from the scalp (as opposed to length of hair).
- (b) **Corporation.** A Fire or Rescue Corporation established in the County, authorized to provide fire, rescue, or emergency medical services.
- (c) **Department.** The Department of Fire and Rescue Services.
- (d) **Facepiece.** Respirator component which covers the wearer's nose, mouth and eyes, designed to make a gas-tight and particle-tight fit with the face.
- (e) **Headgear.** Protective helmet and liner, and Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) facepiece straps, harness, and webbing.
- (f) **Hood.** Protective hood for firefighting, compliant with NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Clothing for Structural Firefighting (revised May, 1991).
- (g) **On-Duty.** Any time that fire, rescue, or emergency medical services personnel are acting in an official capacity or are on the scene of an emergency incident.
- (h) **Personnel.** All fire, rescue, and emergency medical services personnel, including career employees and volunteer members.
- (i) **Respirator.** Device worn to protect the user's respiratory system against exposure to harmful gases, vapors, and particulate matter.



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- (j) Uniform. Issued duty clothing, which includes a collared shirt which may be worn with a tie.

Sec. 4. Policy. It is the policy of the Fire and Rescue Commission that all on-duty fire and rescue personnel must adhere to these hair and grooming standards, which are intended to ensure their safe use of protective respirator facepieces and headgear, and to enhance their professional appearance.

Sec. 5. Safety and Grooming Standards.

- (a) Use of Hood and Headgear. These standards are based on the use of a protective hood and headgear, which must be worn during all direct fire suppression activities or as otherwise required by the officer-in-charge. Personnel must be able to conceal all hair within the protective hood and still maintain the proper fit of headgear. For this reason, the bulk and length of hair, hair accessories, sideburns, beards, mustaches, and other facial hair must not interfere with the proper fit and wearing of firefighting respirator facepieces, headgear, or hoods.

- (1) Hair Length While On-Duty. Hair must be clean and neatly groomed while on-duty. Hair must be worn in such a way that the hair at the back of the head does not extend more than one inch below the bottom of a buttoned collar of a uniform shirt while the individual is standing at attention. Hair must not be visible under the brim of headgear. Decorative shaved areas and other similar hairstyles are prohibited.
- (2) Bulk. Hair bulk must not extend more than two inches from the scalp or interfere with the proper fit of headgear; this includes pigtails and pony-tails.
- (3) Sideburns. Sideburns must be neatly trimmed and tapered in the same manner as the haircut. Sideburns must not extend below the bottom of the ear lobe, must be of consistently even width (not flared), and must end in a clean shaven horizontal line.



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(b) Facial Hair.

- (1) Beards. Personnel participating in activities that may require the use of a tightly-fitting respirator facepiece must be clean shaven. Neatly trimmed beards may be worn only by EMS members and administrative or other members who do not participate in firefighting or other activities which may expose them to toxic atmospheres.
- (2) Mustaches. Mustaches must not extend more than one-half inch beyond a horizontal line drawn across the lower edge of the bottom lip; they must not extend more than 3/4 inch beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth.
- (3) Other Facial Hair. Handlebar mustaches, "Burnsides," and goatees are not permitted.

- (c) Hair Coloring. Hair coloring must be in natural-looking hair tones; colors such as green, purple, blue, etc., are not permitted.
- (d) Hair Accessories. Only pins, combs, rubber or elastic bands, or barrettes that are similar in coloring to the individual's hair color may be worn.
- (e) Jewelry. Earrings or any other jewelry which is loose, dangles, or protrudes from the body must not be worn while on-duty. However, necklaces may be worn under clothing.
- (f) Nothing in this regulation prohibits the Corporations or the Department from adopting a more stringent grooming standard.

Sec. 6. Responsibility.

- (a) Personnel. All personnel must comply with this regulation.
- (b) Supervisors. Immediate supervisors are responsible for taking corrective action and, as appropriate, reporting violations to the appropriate department head.
- (c) Department Heads. For volunteer personnel, the highest elected official of each Corporation is responsible for enforcing this regulation. For career personnel, the Director of the Department is responsible for enforcing this regulation.



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Sec. 7. Exceptions. At the discretion of the Fire and Rescue Commission, exceptions to this standard may be made under special circumstances. Requests for these exceptions must be made to the Commission, including documentation justifying the exception, and supporting memoranda from the Chief of the Corporation or Director of the Department.

Sec. 8. Severability. If a court of final appeal holds that any part of this regulation is invalid, that ruling does not affect other parts of the regulation.

Sec. 9. Effective Date. This regulation is effective thirty days after Council adoption or ninety days after Council receipt if the Council takes no action within sixty days of receipt.

Attest:

George A. Giebel

George A. Giebel, Chairman
Fire and Rescue Commission

11/19/91

Date

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Approved as to form and legality
Montgomery County, Md. County Attorney's Office

By *James J. Pearson*